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### **\$1.5 Million Loan Brings New Broadband Technology Services to Bay City, Midland, Mount Pleasant and Saginaw**

*LANSING:* Today the Michigan Broadband Development Authority (MBDA) announced it closed on a \$1.5 million loan to SpeedNet LLC of Saginaw to bring the first large-scale deployment of a new wireless broadband service to central-Michigan. The financing will provide a new broadband service option to the cities and surrounding areas of Bay City, Midland, Mount Pleasant and Saginaw, which are home to approximately 175,000 residential households and businesses.

Traditional wireless broadband service can often be interrupted by trees, buildings and other obstacles, making such service limited in its reach, without the high-cost installation of large customer antennas. SpeedNet's new wireless service, however, will eliminate this need by utilizing technology that bounces signals around and through obstacles allowing easier transmission. Customers will only need a small modem, similar in cost and installation ease as a cable or DSL modem.

"Our customers are continuing to demand faster, better, and uninterrupted service," said John Ogren, president of SpeedNet LLC. "This new technology will meet that demand and make our services more widely available throughout the region. This loan will expand our market by more than 50 percent, allowing us to reach those customers who previously wanted service but had obstructions between their home or business site and our transmission tower."

"Extending loans to entrepreneurial companies like SpeedNet continues to make Michigan the national leader in unrolling new broadband technologies," said David Hollister, director of the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth. "Our efforts are providing businesses and the citizens of our state choices and more affordable broadband service. This is vital for our competitiveness in today's global economy."

"We are confident our loan will bring the business and residential customers in these target markets a new service that will be in high-demand. SpeedNet's utilization of this new non-line-of-sight (NLOS) technology enables them to deliver the quality and robust service that its customers are asking for and deserve," said James Butler, III, vice president of the MBDA.

*NOTE:* NLOS technology is an emerging broadband product that allows customers to receive a wireless signal from a transmitting tower (in some

instances from distances up to 20 miles away or more) without that signal degrading or being interrupted. The technology is advantageous in areas with rugged geography, where buildings and other obstacles are between the tower and the customer's modem, or when other electronic devices are in use that would negatively impact the ability of a customer to receive a strong signal. It has only been utilized in small test markets around the country. This central Michigan installation is one of the first wide-scale deployments, according to SpeedNet's vendor NextNet Wireless, Inc., of Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The MBDA was created to help the state attract more private sector investment in high-speed, Internet infrastructure, and to increase demand for and utilization of broadband services. It does so by offering 1) low-cost loans to telecommunications companies will to make such investments, and 2) by offering organizations or broadband users low-cost financing for the acquisition of hardware/software applications that will improve or increase their use of broadband service. More information about the MBDA and its programs can be found at [WWW.BROADBANDAUTHORITY.ORG](http://WWW.BROADBANDAUTHORITY.ORG)

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